

Southwestern Writers Collection Collection Development Policy

The Southwestern Writers Collection (SWWC) at Texas State University-San Marcos collects primary and secondary resource material that contributes to an understanding of the greater Southwest through literature, drama, film, music, and other cultural arts. The regional identity expressed as "the Southwest" is considered generally in terms of culture, and as such it is relatively fluid. As J. Frank Dobie has written, "The boundaries of cultures and rainfall never follow survey lines."

The SWWC views the Southwest as a place of rich cultural diversity, and strives to faithfully represent that diversity within its collection. In terms of its physical geography, Dobie's 1934 definition of the Southwest remains very useful: "Arizona, New Mexico, most of Texas, some of Oklahoma, and anything else north, south, east, or west that anybody wants to bring in."

Besides the geographical areas expressed in Dobie's definition, the SWWC also considers the region in terms of its "spirit of place." In this way, distinctly Southwestern themes can appear in works set outside of the region, thereby imbuing those individual works with a Southwestern consciousness.

The SWWC's focus is on relatively modern (post-19th century) works. In collecting primary source materials, the SWWC seeks the works of authors, filmmakers, musicians, or other artists who have provided significant contributions to our understanding of the region through the cultural arts.

The SWWC recognizes that these significant interpretations are produced by residents of the region as well as by those who live outside its geographical boundaries. The SWWC pursues a comprehensive archive of each of the major artists it collects, and in that sense may collect works by the artist that are not necessarily "Southwestern." In those cases, establishing a central repository for the artist's papers themselves may take precedence over the regional emphasis of the SWWC.

Additions to the collections of primary source materials are chosen by the curatorial staff in consultation with the founding donor, who has mutual approval of the items to be collected. The term "mutual approval" does not mean that either party has the authority to veto a proposal from the other, but instead means that every effort will be made to reach agreements. In selecting archival material, the SWWC will consider personal papers, including correspondence, journals, manuscript drafts, and other papers that shed light on the artistic process, as well as artifacts and memorabilia such as photographs, awards, publicity materials, and other items that further illuminate the artistic process and eventual result of that process.

The SWWC reserves the right to decline material that may pose preservation problems, or material that has mold or insect damage that can impact the physical integrity of other collections. The SWWC may also decline artifacts or other original material that do not

meet the criteria previously outlined as appropriate for the collection.

The SWWC concentrates the bulk of its activities and stewardship efforts on material that has been permanently added to the collection. However, the SWWC may also choose to accept selected archives on loan, with the understanding that those loans may eventually be converted into gifts. The loaned material is housed in the same climate-controlled facility as the permanent material, but does not receive archival processing. If the material remains on loan for a period of several years, the SWWC reserves the right to return it to its owner.

The SWWC may also choose to deaccession gifted materials, though such circumstances are rare. In those instances, the SWWC will first attempt to return the material to its original owner or heirs, then attempt to place the material in a more relevant archival repository.

The SWWC also collects appropriate secondary source materials to provide scholarly support for the original source materials housed in the archives. The secondary source material is selected by the curatorial staff. The SWWC seeks to obtain copies of all publications or other works produced by the artists represented in the archival holdings. The SWWC also seeks to obtain all critical works about the artists represented in the archives. The SWWC also collects works of literature, history, film, music, geography, culture, art and politics that provide tangible scholarly support to the archival collections. In its more general role as a major center for Texas and the Southwestern studies, the SWWC also collects significant works of literature, history, film, music, geography, culture, art, and politics that, while they may not directly support the individual archives in the collection, are considered significant contributions to the study of issues of regional identity.

Through this integrated program of identifying and collecting appropriate primary and secondary source artists and works, the SWWC seeks to provide a major resource for understanding how the cultural arts interpret life in the Greater Southwest.

Book Ordering Priorities

General Note: most of our collection deals with 20th century cultural studies in Texas, and the book orders are prioritized with that emphasis. Our aim, generally, is to build a collection that provides valuable representations of the modern culture(s) of Texas , and to a lesser degree the Southwest, through the written word.

Still, we do collect pre-20th century materials, with an emphasis on fiction, first-person narratives, and histories with some "social" sense to them. We tend to stay away from most military histories and "wild west" gunfighter material— a number of other repositories already have those fields well-covered.

With that in mind, here are the specific criteria for priorities, in descending order:

1. Book by authors/artists in our archives
2. critical works about authors/artists in our archives
3. significant works of fiction/history/cultural studies set in Texas
4. Important general works on SW literature, bibliographies, SW film, music, book design, and some art.
5. Texas Mexican studies: books relating to literature, history, and culture of Texas Mexicans
6. additional books by the authors already present in our in our secondary book collection.
7. significant works of fiction from New Mexico and the rest of the Southwest
8. additional books of Texas fiction/history/culture that may represent more niche areas.
9. secondary general works on SW literature, history, photography, film, music,
10. works on Mexican-American studies from outside of Texas (NM, AZ, CA)
11. significant Native American fiction/history/culture in the Southwest

Sources Used in Book Ordering:

serials:

Texas Books in Review

Texas Observer

Texas Monthly

Austin Chronicle

Southwestern American Literature

Western American Literature

Southwestern Historical Quarterly

Western Historical Quarterly

Journal of South Texas

Borderlands Journal

Texas Journal of Ideas, History, and Culture

Journal of the Southwest

newspapers such as Dallas Morning News, A-A Statesman, etc...

Internet & electronic resources:

Chicle discussion group

H-Texas discussion group

H-Review discussion group

H-Western History

Amazon.com

Books in Print database

publishers' catalogs:

Arte Publico

Bilingual Press

UT Press

Texas A&M Press & affiliates

UNM Press

,Utah, Arizona, Oklahoma, Nebraska, Kansas...

Texas Western

Red Crane books
Third Woman Press
Cinco Puntos
NLCC
rare book dealers